

Speech Delivered on Occasion of Opening of SA Hellenic High School
5/6/87

The Honourable Minister Mr.. Pik Botha, Mr. Ambassador for Greece Dr. Papageorgiou, Mrs. Papageorgiou, Mr. Bizos Chairman of Saheti, Ladies and Gentlemen.

It is with great sincerity that I address a vote of thanks this evening to all those concerned with Saheti.

Ten eerste Mnr. die Minister ons hartlikke dank vir die waardevolle tyd wat u afgestaan het om vanaand saam met ons te wees tydens die opening van Saheti se Hoër Skool.

U ondersteuning in die verlede asook vanaand dui daarop dat u 'n senior lid van die Suid Afrikaanse Regering uself openlik en entoesiasties assosieer op alle vlakke van die S.A. lewe en sy mense.

The fact that we as South African Hellenes have made such an investment in South Africa for the education of our children as well as children of other language groups, who wish to choose Saheti as their school, signifies the confidence that we have in our country. To some, South Africa is the adopted motherland, to others it is their country of birth, but all have chosen to do whatever is possible to retain their culture and heritage and thus the creation of this wonderful institution Saheti. On the other hand the support by yourself and your Government on numerous occasions of Saheti and other South African Hellenic Organisation indicates that no matter what the size of the Community, no matter its origin, no matter its colour, race and religion it has its rightful place in South Africa. Your continued support encourages us and we appreciate it.

There is no doubt Mr. Minister, that with this spirit we will retain the flame of western civilisation in this wonderful country of ours.

Το ΣΑΧΕΤΙ και οι άλλοι ελληνικοί οργανισμοί που δρουν στη Νότιο Αφρική, έχουν τη βαριά υποχρέωση να διατηρήσουν εδώ άσβεστη τη φλόγα του αρχαίου ελληνικού πολιτισμού, που αποτέλεσε τη βάση του ευρωπαϊκού και ολόκληρου του Δυτικού Πολιτισμού.

Mr. Minister, once more my thanks to you for your wonderful words and your presence - really words fail one to say how much it is appreciated and valued.

Mr. Ambassador, how does one thank you, almost on the eve of your departure.

You have gone well beyond your duties as an Ambassador of a country. You have associated yourself with Hellenism in South Africa in all spheres and all levels.

You have been a true example to us at Saheti. How and what we should do, what we should strive for. Your assistance in Saheti has endorsed the importance of this institution and has also given us greater initiative to achieve Saheti's goals. Thank you, there is no doubt that your link with Saheti will remain

forever, there is no doubt your personal aim, that we should liquidate our debt, will be met, Mr. Ambassador, I am certain that your friends and followers in South Africa will not let you down, we are grateful.

Εξοχότατε κύριε Πρόεδρε,

Είμαστε σίγουροι ότι σύντομα θα μπορέσουμε να εξοφλήσουμε το χρέος μας, με το νοικοκύρεμα που έχει ήδη γίνει στο πρόγραμμα του ΣΑΧΕΤΙ. Σας είμαστε ευγνώμονες για τις κατευθύνσεις που μας δώσατε, η εφαρμογή των οποίων μας επιτρέπει σήμερα να αισιοδοξούμε.

How does one say thank you to our Chairman, Mr. George Bizos, I really think its going to take a month of evenings to be able to highlight what he has done for Saheti to bring it to where it is. The rocky mountains that we had to cross became green pastures as a result of his enthusiasm and hard work. It is through his unstinting efforts and dedication supported by wonderful people such as our Ambassador and our Minister, Mr. Pik Botha and others that the Parthenon of South Africa was built - Saheti.

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Thank you to all those parents, past and present, for the confidence shown in the school, You are assured that it is not an easy decision to place your children in the hands of an institution that was not as yet recognised. An institution that did not have a track record. Thank you for the confidence placed in this Institution the academic results and short successful history we are all enjoying are now obvious - our children can only benefit.

Thank you to those who have worked so hard, Mrs. Panos, the Ladies Committee, all the Chairladies and Committees prior to the present one, members of the Board, members of the P.T.A. both nursery school and ordinary school, the staff, thank you to one and all.

Last but not least, Ladies and Gentlemen, I come to those who put their hands in their pockets, those people who were approached, those who came of their own accord. The grandfathers, aunts, uncles of children and many others. Those people that felt obligated to donate money to the cause of Saheti. How does one thank these people?. Some of them are here this evening to enjoy the fruits of their contributions - the completion of the Saheti High School.

Mr. Minister, with the deep concern of one and all regarding the debt structure of Saheti, which is not uncommon to all private schools in the Republic, as well as the enthusiasm and concern of our Ambassador, the Board embarked on a "operation boot strap", in order to entertain the Saheti debt. A conscientious and concerted drive was commenced in November, 1985 at which 'Saheti 100' was formed. Briefly for those who do not know what 'Saheti 100' is all about, it is the breakdown of the Saheti debt into R30 000.00 units payable over a period of 5 years either by an individual or a group of people, societies and other organisations, institutions within the Hellenic South African structure.

The initial drive, Mr. Minister, resulted in an amount of in excess of R600 000.00 being pledged and during the course of the first eighteen months over R200 000.00 has already been paid towards this pledge.

The debt, a deep concern to one and all still faces us.

However, Mr. Minister, Mr. Ambassador, Ladies and Gentlemen, I have no doubt that there are others here this evening, that would either like to increase their pledge or would like to be part of 'Saheti 100' if they as yet have not joined in the original drive.

Mr. Minister, Mr. Ambassador, I ask your indulgence for the next few minutes while I give an opportunity to those that have Saheti at heart, to again put their hands in their pockets if they have not as yet done so - and naturally to those who would like to again make a further contribution

Το κτιριακό πρόγραμμα του ΣΑΧΕΤΙ ολοκληρώθηκε. Μαζί με τα εγκαίνια των κτιρίων του Γυμνασίου και Λυκείου, γιορτάζουμε σήμερα και τα ελπιδοφόρα αποτελέσματα του ΣΑΧΕΤΙ σε ακαδημαϊκό επίπεδο, τις επιτυχίες των αποφοίτων του σχολείου μας στα ανώτατα πνευματικά ιδρύματα. Μας μένει βέβαια το χρέος, που η αντιμετώπισή του παραμένει τώρα ο μοναδικός μας σκοπός.

Σας παρακαλούμε για μια ακόμη φορά να βοηθήσετε άμεσα στην εξόφληση του χρέους του ΣΑΧΕΤΙ. Είμαστε απόψε αρκετοί εδώ που αν και προσφέραμε ήδη, θα μπορούσαμε να δώσουμε ακόμη κάτι παραπάνω ή αν δεν έχουμε προσφέρει ακόμη, απόψε είναι η πιο κατάλληλη ευκαιρία να αποδείξουμε ότι δεν θα υστερήσουμε.

I take this opportunity to stress that we are not here to examine the size of each contribution. We are looking at volume - I have always respected smaller contributions - they signify participation - 'Totem et Partibus' There are a number of promissory notes available for you to complete - any amount is welcome.

Let us see this wonderful enthusiasm of the Hellenic, Saheti supporters,

let us judge them by what contributions they will make this evening. Is there any reason why we should not target an immediate R1 m this evening in pledges.

Let us move this Barometer.

While your conscience is now possibly troubling you and you are trying to arrive at a figure, let me remind you that this beautiful hall in which we are seated has a price tag on it. It is in want of a God Father. The cost to be the God Father of this beautiful hall is R500 000.00. Arrangements and period of contribution are obviously negotiable. The two nursery schools are also in dire need of a God Father, hereto the price is R250 000.00 each.

These amounts are tax deductible within a given formula. Members of the Board are there to give you guidance as to how best to make your contribution. All I ask you for the moment is to lift up

you had to say yes please

I again thank you all, I thank you for your indulgence. Perhaps this little vote of thanks has gone beyond that of an ordinary gesture of thanks but believe me all those that I have thanked, and there are so many more that should be thanked who publicly deserve it - all deserve it. Above all those who have put their hands in their pockets, I think really deserve the greatest thanks.

Thank you.

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